



LIBERTY

The Final Frontier?

*A collection of poetry by
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Dedication

To our chutes and ladders.

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WILL BE REMOVED BEFORE PRINTING.**

January 6, 2022

metaphor poem, future thoughts

so long old year you had
memorable memories hello
new year let's hope for more
I think though I'm at the age
where I should be writing out
my last wishes--of course we
should all do this at any age –
no telling what's coming down
the pike--for my event the tunes
should be handel bach brahms
but I also want (minus its
first & last schmaltzy stanzas)
– the chatanooga choo choo

January 13, 2022

archival find #51

good neighbors can still dispute:
my grandma and mrs smith argued
year after year which farm owned
the fanning-mill which rotated twixt
the two places I never heard the
ins and outs of the conflict but
I do know this: when the
fearsome storms of `78 struck,
our barn east of the dairy blew
down there was only crawl space
to get inside; I and a friend snuck
under the precarious roof and eased
out two items: my dad's aluminum
canoe and a fanning mill; an hour
later the settling roof would have
splat us flat but now we know
which farm ended up with the
fanning mill, not that it had had
any use for fifty or more years

January 20, 2022

philosophy poem # 17

a close kin planned to be wed
in a laden orange grove – green
lush adjacent to her future home
however near the entrance was
unsightly debris the worst being
an abandoned school bus destined
for chicken coopdom my advice
was to move the eye sore out of
wedding range; an “impossibility”
so I expanded my philosophy to
“cover the wreck!” this also vetoed
so further creative compromise:
“can’t move, can’t cover, then
decorate!” the bus now bedecked
with colorful cutouts made an
enviable entrance to the event
and later a unique henhouse

January 27, 2022

conjecture poem #1

sometimes something defines
a life (besides one's "being" itself)
my cousin, a post grad from ohio
working in israel was alone in
the office of antiquities all those
in charge off at a meeting when
a group of bedouins showed
up with an arm full of scrolls
they'd found in an unexplored
cave my cousin had enough
training and knowledge to
realize these discoveries were
ancient; these men needed to be
welcomed with respect: the scrolls
subsequently intensively studied
came to be known as "the dead sea
scrolls" the rest of my cousin's life
was dedicated to the interpretation
and importance of this find you can
note his name john c trever on dust
jackets read his words I sometimes
wonder what his life might have been
were he not in the right place at the
right time I also sometimes wonder
what time, place I might have missed
or any of us for that matter but
it's of course just idly wondering

February 3, 2022

Bored of the Rings?

I resisted reading Tolkien's LOR
– feared I'd not like it or I'd like
it so much I couldn't put it down
but how could I refuse reading
the greatest fantasy since Alice
when as new teacher new college
new class "fantasy literature" I
was forced to tackle it: found I
could both enjoy it, set it down
now as a retiree I'm reading it
again: so many copycats make
the original hackneyed, repetitious
inventions, inverted language, constant
sword smiting (one needs a scorecard)
but hey! in volume 2 JRRT carried
away by his story forgets noble
narration, simply tells the tale: when
inferiors implode LOR will remain
rabbit holy its immortality inevitable

February 10, 2022

Valentine Poem

*These words were written by my mother,
Vera Wardner Dougan, to my father
early in their marriage.*

If I could give to you one only gift
To hold forever in remembrance of me
'Twould be the peace that enters in the heart
When love comes there to dwell all silently.

I'd warm it in the silver of the moon
And tie it with the distant purple haze;
I'd seal it with a baby's little smile,
And send it so, to gladden all your days!



February 17, 2022

grade school poem #1

elementary schools were called grade
when I was a kid; I've been trying to
retrieve one specific memory from each
level while courting sleep: kindergarten
isn't hard I can still see Phil Samp and
Jack Frey fighting on the big rug rolling
punching – and what are they fighting
about? why, ME – which one do I love
the best? is this an accurate recollection?
yes but is the reason for the altercation
true? maybe but who can be sure about
perception at any time? soon I will tell
you about first grade I know you are on
tenterhooks with avid anticipation

February 24, 2022

family chatter poem #3

my grandson has become a licensed skydiver he tells me he knows a chap that Guinness refuses to recognize who in turn has started his own record book S.A.N.S. (Society for the Advancement of Naked Skydiving) with himself topping the list at over 840 bareass jumps I ask my grandson what his ambition is to create some sort of memento – he says it's to peel and eat an entire banana after leaving the strut but before opening his parachute I think he's yanking my leg but maybe not my next question to him will be what do you do with the peel? or perhaps he'd consider tandem grandma-grandson jumps while I knit him a mitten which he will try on for size before pulling the rip cord

March 3, 2022

first grade memory #1

actually I have three for 1st grade
it's the first day of school we have
all been promoted to a regular classroom
with orderly desks the first desk in the
first row is billy gharrity's but he refuses
to sit in it he is kicking screaming
bellowing flailing his arms he does not
want to be in first grade he wants to go
back to kindergarten he liked it there all us
new first graders huddle in flabbergastation
at last teacher principal janitor etc. let him
have his own way he returns to kindergarten:
for the next 12 years he trails behind us

March 10, 2022

my mother's school

my mom went to grade school in
chicago, near north side I think it
was called carl shurz may still be
there the principal came to the first
grade every monday morning gave
the class a poem to memorize he'd
return on friday to hear the students
recite the poem he did the same with
each grade so that by the time mom
moved on to high school she'd
committed to memory a poem a week
for 8 years: the principal chose works
suitable to the age of each class
in my mother's old age blind and
confined she recited hours of poetry
with a grand-daughter; both they and I
blessed that principal – I had only one
high school teacher who had us
memorize – some works I memorized
on my own I've found now in these
older years that reciting poetry in my
mind while courting sleep drives away
extraneous thoughts leads to more rapid
peaceful slumber I'm grateful to mom's
principal plus that teacher who assigned
to us ulysses, to a skylark, shakespeare

March 17, 2022

first grade memory #2

I am standing at the blackboard
we each have a section our name
written at the top we are learning
to write it in cursive I already know
so I am pretending however I badly
need to pee but am too timid to leave
my assigned spot my teacher however
notes me squirming suggests I visit
the restroom I hunch out humiliated
though thankful I didn't puddle the floor
as a girl in kindergarten did we were
playing hot potato all sitting in a ring
a widening puddle surrounded her
she phoned me when we were about 50
amongst other chat she asked if I recalled –
I interrupted said of course I do
we both laughed ruefully
why is it humiliations we remember?

March 24, 2022

emigration poem # 1

she was 6 months old, my grandma, cuddled in the lap of her mother as the two large families waited on the birmingham dock to board the ship that would carry them to america the baby's aunt looked critically at the infant's bonnet then said to the mother, "Where'd you get that 'at?" my great-grandma meekly replied "I have another in me bag." her sister-in-law: "Prithee put it on." where did I get this 1858 glimpse with its accurate wording, scene, personalities? from my favorite great-aunt, 9 at that departure, who told us in her clipped midlands accent, which accent, memories, she never lost



March 31, 2022

burma shave poem #1

with super highways we have lost
burma shave signs that were so clever
so enjoyable – but language changes
as well as highways and the last
word of this burma shave sequence
my grandkids didn't recognize:
"If hugging on highways – Is your sport –
Turn in your car – For a davenport!"

April 7, 2022

first grade memory # 3

my final 1st grade memory: we lined up for recess my line against the wall by the door hanging from the wall were large placards one for each morning with dick-and-jane words to learn on that day you could see only the top card I already was a reader but I stood in that line waiting for it to move and stealthily peeked behind card after card to see the words to come I knew this wasn't really cheating yet somehow felt like it was: it's still a clear remembrance I smile that it retains its faint whiff of guilt

April 14, 2022

boring poem #1

my niece wendy a nurse herself
is editing a book on nursing theory
so boring she thinks she'll try reading
it back to front she says it's worse
than the one she just edited which
was called "veterinary dentistry"

April 21, 2022

second grade poem

my one clear pictorial memory of that class
other than my teacher's sweet kindly face
is that on may day I was given so many
may baskets they wouldn't all fit in my
raise-top desk although I crammed the lid
as hard as I could: miss kelly suggested
gently that I put them on the floor beneath
my chair I squatted to obey neatly lining up
the dainty (or rough homemade) candy and
flower filled tributes. this is remembered from
my acute embarrassment: also, in retrospect,
feeling nobody should get so many baskets

April 28, 2022

misconception

when we lived in newhaven we chose
to live downtown over a tavern close to
the university but cheap rent; at night the
jukebox blared up through the floor so we
gave our central bedroom to our small
daughters figuring they could sleep
through the noise better than we could
come school end we moved to a
lake cottage one kid lay on a cot
while the other sang to her I thought
how sweet they are playing mother and
baby then the singer said "now I'll be
the baby and you be the jukebox"

May 5, 2022

more burma shave poems

“If you don’t know
Whose signs these are
You can’t have traveled
Very far”

my brothers favorite:
“Don’t lose your head
To save a minute
You need your head
Your brains are in it”

May 12, 2022

WW2 Poem # 9

maybe I've written this before but
my dad was doing 2 jobs during ww2
with such a shortage of help he ran
a milk route from 3 am then returned
to manage the details of a fifty person
farm one day his ultrazealous herdsman
came to him said "the lord has called me
to this special work in kentucky so I must
leave abruptly" my dad replied "would you
please ask our heavenly father to phone at a
more convenient time? or suggest he dialed
a wrong number?" but the herdsman packed
up his dog cat spouse kids pulled out pronto
some authorities you just don't quibble with

May 19, 2022

third grade memory # 1

ronald grow in my third grade class repeated loudly and jeeringly (I can still hear every syllable) “there’s not any santa claus! it’s just your mother and father!” a desperate yammering crew (myself among them) appealed to miss hermann I can still see her gazing out the window her faint smile her misty distant eyes hear her say “I have never seen santa claus – but I do know there is a christmas spirit.” that was enough for us. but by spring of that 3rd grade year I was too old to believe in the easter bunny

May 26, 2022

kentucky coffee tree poem

the news is so terribly terrible
I won't write about it instead
I've found my daughter's high
school biology "leaf collection"
here are leaves asked for: paw paw,
witch hazel, chinquapin oak, bladder
nut, burr oak, lombardy poplar, osage
orange, etc. etc. it took all fall, was
a bad assignment for the leaves,
supposed to be local often were not:
kids needed a parent even a car also
a tree book to fulfill their task
for instance the kentucky coffee tree
was only found in lincoln memorial
garden I called the city arborist to
see where one might be, other parents
were also confounded, my kid got
an A on her collection but it took
community effort some lessons are
learned not necessarily intended ones

June 2, 2022

3rd grade memory #2

third grade was WONDERFUL! we studied indians our small texts well written beautifully illustrated a totally different culture new words papooses on boards tepee travois buffalo no mention of horses pilgrims thanksgiving I was fascinated absorbed modeled a bison from clay spent the next summer wearing a feathered head band you can see it in photos we all were "indians" – my dad told me we had a half breed indian on the farm I eyed him from a distance he seemed no different from other farmhands much later I wrote a whole book about white kids playing indian it costs the most online of all my books people want copies for their own kids my dad also told me an occasional indian would walk the banks of turtle creek – his tribe's old home I think of that indian what his thoughts must be what I didn't learn in third grade was how many native americans there still were in wisconsin how recently potawatomi and other tribes were forced to reservations yet many remain a day is coming when we shall all be planetary refugees with no reservations to shelter us for good or ill



June 9, 2022

Paul, old friend, writes:

when we were kids yes we played a lot of monopoly but mostly I remember lying in a cot on the porch of your lake cottage telling ghost stories in the dark I'd never dreamed I could make up a gruesome tale as I went along, even less I'd like doing so you all opened up many new interests to me

June 16, 2022

observances poem #1

when I was a wisconsin kid we celebrated lincoln's birthday and washington's birthday on separate holidays memorial day labor day were holidays too and on november 11 at 11 am we stood at our desks for three minutes of silence for ww1 armistice which occurred before our births of course we were off classes for christmas, new years, easter we studied u.s. history in 8th grade, 12th memorized the gettysburg address – back on the farm an indian laborer looked like anyone else so I didn't know; scandinavian workers we had two a year they talked with a lilt; a black routeman andy delivered cottage cheese cream butter to blacks whites alike: our town had one chinese family they took our milk we ate chow mien at their shop – yes, we did learn much in school and out involving our history culture but never a word about juneteenth its significance, my ignorance: now a most honored national remembrance, holiday!

June 23, 2022

4th grade memories

I can still sing one line of “september gave a party” miss julian taught us that first day: her voice, song non-memorable dictionary drill was columns of listless words to teach us the resource I’d used for eons, why didn’t I seek out exciting expressions discard our directions? but one obeys assignments in fourth grade yet once I heard giggles over my shoulder here was miss j sneakily reading a gleeful story I was writing in a bit of free time – “molly the maggot” raising her brood in a dead man’s guts: she read it to the class, they howled, it was printed in the local paper; my literary career launched

June 30, 2022

Drama poem #1

Location: paved barnyard

Contents: dried cow pats, huge
cow tank with water three feet deep,
plus a slide down into the pool

Cast: wary cows; three small kids

Action: Joan (God) and Patsy (Jesus)
at foot of slide waiting to catch Jackie
(smallest) as she skitters down into
the blue waves: she's the "Good Woman
Coming to Heaven"

Postscript: Jackie (now oldish) hopes when
her slide-time comes it will be that easy

July 7, 2022

Fifth grade memory #1

I was the top tongue-twister:
“the big black bug bled black
blood on the big barn floor”
“to sit in solemn silence in a
dull, dark dock in a pestilential
prison with a life-long lock
awaiting the sensation of a short
sharp shock...” plus much more
this latter from Gilbert and Sullivan
though I didn’t realize till later when
G&S became family favorites: learned
also of Sullivan’s anger for G&S fame while
S’s gem, “the lost chord” was left behind

July 14, 2022

Autograph book

came on a reprint of old autographs from booklets kids used to write in before the electronic age, many are sappy “yours ‘til the kitchen sinks,” “yours ‘til the bed spreads,” one is sort of funny, “yours ‘til they feed the corn on your toes to the calves of your legs,” one speaks to me I was a latin major “latin is a dead language. it’s plain enough to see. It killed off all the romans, and now it’s killing me.”

I made up a verse of my own in jr high: “the lightning flashed; the thunder roared and all the earth was shaken the little pig curled up her tail and ran to save her bacon” I can’t remember when I last wrote that my grandson, a skydiver, says you mustn’t leave your logbook loose at the diving center; you might receive “tasteful” drawings such as one saying “when adjusting your harness you’d rather have a line over than a nut under” but we can’t put that in IT can we!

July 21, 2022

Fifth grade memory #2

a story in an auxiliary reader delighted me so much our teacher asked me to read it to the class I did so with enthusiasm it was called hare and hounds the tricks of the hares to avoid capture were capricious and clever for instance they scattered their paper-bit clues on either side of a fence forcing hounds to climb back and forth losing time while hares skipped merrily ahead: but well into the saga miss hurst gently asked me to stop—the tale far longer than she'd thought; did classmates ever finish the story? I dunno – it was less a humiliation more a realization about time pace taste, 20 years later I went back to that room in search of that reader but it was gone...

July 28, 2022

damselfly poem, written 1942

from the rowboat I leaned in
to look at it; it was clinging
to a reed the eyes were like
dumbbells bulging bulbs that
covered most of each side of
the head its long tail (notched
like snake grass) was a soft
lavender marked with smokey
black its six legs had even hairs
like curved sawteeth its transparent
wings webbed down the sides then
it swiveled its head and flew away

August 4, 2022

fifth grade memory #3

when our teacher told us one of our class won the city-wide 5th grade safety poster contest I knew of course that it was me but surprise, it was my good friend nona smith who won with her picture of an open medicine cabinet with bottles of different sizes lined up on the shelves I was glad yes for nona for I instantly realized her warning to be wary of medications appealed more to the general public than my kid in a leafy tree with the slogan "don't climb on dangerous branches" no matter how well drawn for most viewers wouldn't be in trees but everybody looks in cabinets it's a lesson I've never forgot nor will I ever forget nona's incredulous smile

August 11, 2022

summer report

our loons are back again this season
vermont tracks all nesting loons
109 pairs last year our lake allotted one
pretty noisy in the middle of the night
loons migrate to southern maine for
the winter figure that one out folks
2 herons stood on the dock yesterday
also the white indian pipes are back
the fishercat turns out to be a mink
it eats our crayfish minnies clams
we swim every day keep the kayaks
canoe sailboat rowboat busy it has new
oars what else is there to say but its
hard to be home again in this heat

August 18, 2022

Fifth grade poem #4

In third grade I entered a “book” in the townwide hobby show a collection of short bits mostly animal subjects, won a prize no other contestants of any age; in 4th grade ditto though “Bumpy and Billy Bones” had chapters; dog heroes having farm adventures we were not allowed; come 5th grade my book was a continued Oz-like story, kids visiting strange countries in the clouds, the best character their guide, a bird “Talka” but now I skipped the town hobby comp for an editor friend of my mom’s liked my ms, ran it weekly in the Galesburg Post for five months: my kids crashed to earth when printed word caught up to penciled I’ve refused deadlines ever since except of course these IT poems (btw, I wrote no more till college: 6th grade comp class taught us we had to know what we were writing before we wrote it)

August 25, 2022

apple harvest poem

one fall during the great depression
the apple orchard was overloaded
every tree groaned under its burden
everybody ate apples applesauce apple
pie apple brown betty still too many
apples grampa took a large wagon we kids
spent hours pitching in apples till the van
was almost full then grampa hitched it up
drove it into town parked it in a section
of needy folk unhitched the horses drove
back to the farm he returned the next day
we kids rode along again found a bare van
nobody pointed out this was an example
of sharing we learned sharing in our bones

September 1, 2022

we remember we forget

I had a great idea once was I four? five?
I was standing on the walk between
the big house and the little house on the
farm I could hardly wait to tell my sisters
they came tumbling out of the little house
their heads filled with their own great ideas
I tucked mine away to bring up later but
when later came it wasn't there: all my life
I have wondered what that great idea was
even now long useless to implement I still
remember I'd had that great idea once
still wonder what it was that was so special

September 8, 2022

sixth grade poem

it was common knowledge like the
medes and persians: were we ever even
taught it? “when you read write do sums
etc you should have your light coming
over your left shoulder” somehow this
edict came up in 6th grade and someone
asked for the first time ever “why?” wow!
what a fascinating discussion ensued why
indeed? we came to a reasonable solution:
people are right-handed; this means you’re
not working in your own shadow—but now
the next remark became inevitable “what
about lefties?” the class surveyed itself
our only lefty was billy woods it was with
great ceremony and glee that he and his
desk were moved so that HIS light would
come over his right shoulder: this was as
vital as any lesson we learned in our grade
school, maybe any school whether we realized
it then – two lessons: assumptions need analysis
to prove or disprove veracity – and the world
will usually favor the majority

September 15, 2022

Jay poem #1

*This poem is by my grandson Jay Ryan
from a booklet he's compiled of his work.*

In the Northern Hemisphere,
Conifers are tall.
And in the negative latitudes,
they are small
described with adjectives like
"prostrate" and "creeping".

Opposite is the set of stars in the sky,
As are the man-in-the-moon's eyes.

Things are upside down on this side
of the earth
I am sometimes so am...

September 22, 2022

similes poem #2

I'm sure I have written before
about my dad talking with vivid
similes but perhaps missed this
particular one: in an old letter
he writes to me that a certain
farmer we both know "walks
like a constipated meadowlark"

September 29, 2022

seventh grade poem #1

wartime, me in jr high, not a cafeteria
in any school those yet to come: but
moms all over town filling men's jobs
yet kids had to eat lunch: our school
crammed us into a hall behind the
gym dank dark noisy sweat-smelly
fed us from vats of mac & cheese
I hated it took my lunch from home
into a deserted corridor—a teacher
appeared popping grapes into her maw
said "no eating in these halls!" I blurted
"why don't you practice what you
preach?" she flew into a rage dragged
me to the office I got 3 detentions plus
a heavy lecture – odd thing though: even
as I'd said those words I hadn't realized
how awful they were till afterwards – what
a reprehensible smart-alec they made of me
all my life the occasional remembrance has
caused me to wonder two things: how could I
have ever spoken such? plus spoken innocently?

October 6, 2022

vulgarity

on the farm grampa forbid drinking smoking swearing though with his deafness some must have gone on behind his back but us kids didn't hear it my dad however was grampa's partner and obeyed his rules though he did smoke in the house he also swore around the place but in french so that us kids also would exclaim a loud "merde!" when occasion demanded although we did not know the meaning yet today I hear kids quite little ones saying words that in former times would have gotten their mouths washed out with soap I wonder if they are ignorant of the meanings too!

October 13, 2022

the nickel man – a seventh grade encounter

a bonus of jr high school was after lunch I walked with my 9th grade sister to a small mom-and-pop store where patsy and I each bought a 5 c ice cream cone every noon we passed a business man probably on his way home to eat – how it began we don't recall but on seeing him we'd chant "we wish we had a nickel we wish we had a nickel" he ignored us then one day he stopped suddenly turned out his pockets a cascade of nickels rained to the sidewalk he went on as we scrambled to gather the bonanza they turned out to be entirely slugs not a nickel amongst them after that we passed the nickel man in silence all faces expressionless I wish we'd had the guts to say we STILL wish we had a nickel or better yet to present him with one of ours

October 20, 2022

Grampa's Wisdom

In a letter to me from my Iowa cousin I have found these words: "When we visited the farm I had long talks with Uncle Wes, your grandfather. I had to write my part, on account of his deafness. He asked me once if I knew what was an educated man. I confessed I did not." I think my grampa's words to Dorothy are worth passing on to all readers. He said to her, "An educated man is one who has taught his mind to think, his heart to feel, and his hand to act."

October 27, 2022

October 7th, 1958: Ron to all his kids

“Secretary of Agriculture Benson was here recently and I went to hear him. He stopped in Janesville at George Conway’s farm the next morning and found George still in bed – it made all the news services! Speaking of sleep I had quite a scare last night – I awoke to a ruddy glow in our room, leapt from the covers in a curve I wish my milk graph would emulate and found I’d been dozing with an eye glued to the illuminated face of our electric blanket’s control switch!”

November 3, 2022

synchronicity

I was nearby at grandkid's birth
a wee new soul upon the earth
I marveled as her mother bore her
I had birthed that child before her
I a child my mother bore me
she her mother her before me

I have come to realize
feelings seldom synchronize
moments of the deepest kind
craving a companion mind
are often hardest ones to share
it's not that those I love don't care
but they are all at different places
different worries different faces
and most times when I have tried
words don't come my tongue is tied
or if they come they can't convey
all behind the words need say
but at a birth the moments touch
(and at a death) I know that much

November 10, 2022

Two Barn Stories

I spent more time in the barns than my sibs not sure why but found them interesting also I always had a pet goat I had to sit astride her to trim her hoofs no crags to wear them off it meant though that I put her to bed nightly so I was alone in our barn when I heard a faint bleat from a nearby stall found a premature calf: my dad came down explained the problem of spontaneous abortion. Also one twenty-below night I discovered a cow down with little hooves poking from her vagina my dad came out; neither of us could birth the calf I ran for my brother the three of us managed the delivery like the folk tale of pulling up the turnip but the calf was dead the mother suffered birthing paralysis we banked her with straw, coats, blankets – she was tended for days but the cold did not cease or she would have been propped up in a frame possibly recovered I checked her daily after school till she was gone my grampa said at my tears “when there’s livestock there’s dead stock”

November 17, 2022

hog heaven

on the dairy my dad's farm manager
was in charge of crops cows cream butter
also milk routes but his specialty was swine
he had his own drove of pigs that he tended
with loving care: when occasionally
he had to drive some distance to deliver
seedcorn or on some other essential errand
he'd take one of his prize pigs along with him
in hopes of interesting a buyer the joke among
the hired men, among all of us, was that he
carried a pig in the front seat for company
who knows? I've traveled with far worse fare
and "swine" beat "kine" to be the smartest
of animals...including homo sapiens

November 24, 2022

conscience poem

I've killed four animals through ignorance
they have been on my conscience all my life
I'll spare you the details one was a small
frog one was a lamb one may have been
a raccoon or at least a creature who lives
under brush the fourth was a puppy whose
death was really from my lack of courage
there are probably others I could add
to the list that I've not realized – I think
what's needed is for me to forgive myself

December 1, 2022

holidays

my teacher friend replied when I asked if her kids were excited about 5 days off for thanksgiving that she ignored all holidays – “Some few squeal that they are going to Cancun but too many know they probably won’t eat for five days: the school lunch is their only meal.” – not every town has st johns breadline, salvation army, churches that provide regular meals to the homeless

December 8, 2022

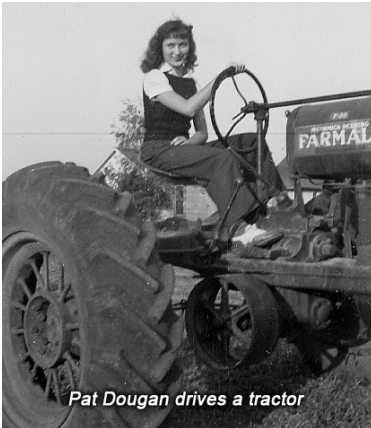
sun bonnet sue

our junior high 9th graders staged an operetta every year; my sisters had solos their years I'd have been part of the chorus my 9th grade for I had no solo voice but that was ok all us 8th graders looked forward to our coming turn but then the director skimmed off the best 8th grade male singers gave them leads in the 9th grade performance and announced this to be the last operetta ever we 8th graders felt hoodwinked except those lucky chosen boys I still remember nanette mccloud tiny beautiful 9th grader singing "washing dishes washing dishes that is all I do it seems... while my head is full of dreams" and one of our 8th grade boys serenading "sun bonnet sue, how I love you, deep in your eyes there's an ocean of blue..." but it was still a lousy betrayal of us 8th graders also of those discarded 9th grade boys clearly I've quenched my resentment!

December 15, 2022

Haying Poem (letter to a friend 1945)

I drove the tractor for haying today
when we stopped to relax I sat in the
warm sun on the whippetree I
would have lain under it but it's too
narrow to give much shade and the
harness straps get in the way. I
talked with the other hayers, kids
my age since dad can't get adult
hired help on account of the war
but he told us we did an okay job



Pat Dougan drives a tractor

December 22, 2022

Christmas Poem

Christmas is coming,
The goose is getting fat
Please put a penny in
The old man's hat
If you haven't got a penny
A ha'penny will do
If you haven't got a ha'penny
Then, God bless you!
(nursery rhyme)
And,
"God bless you, every one!" --
(Tiny Tim)

December 29, 2022

1958: Ron writing to his kids

Mommy is polishing up a speech, it will be pearl-like in perfection even to the inner glow. Now if only I could get her to address one of my organizations, like the Hibernian Irregulars, whose annual dinner of poached hare and baked potatoes is coming up next week. They are descendants of the survivors of the famine of '48 and most any Irishman is eligible.

Also by Jacqueline Jackson:

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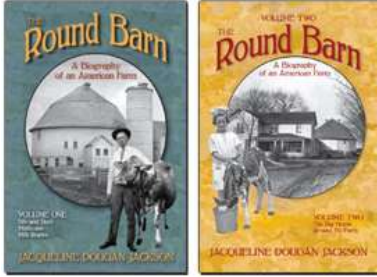


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The Round Barn



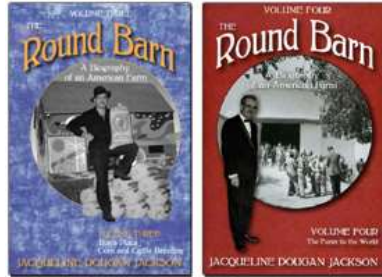
“After reading an inch into this almost 500-page book I crave my favorite dairy food every time I start reading again. Can you imagine having a close enough relationship with your dairy farmer that you can tell when the cows change their eating habits? Grace Croneis, wife of Beloit College’s president in the early fifties, is heard to remark, ‘Well, I can tell the Dougan

cows are enjoying spring pasture!’ I’m wondering about why and how the farm ended: guess that happens in Volume 4. Writing about this book makes me want to go slather a piece of zucchini bread with butter.” - Goodreads, 2014

And now Volume 4 of The Round Barn is available as Jackie Dougan Jackson completes her almost unbelievable effort in creating what I believe is the most complete history of Wisconsin agriculture ever recorded. It tells of the farm's effect on the state, nation, and world.

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“Jackie Jackson continues to keep open the Round Barn doors at the Dougan family farm to tell us an American story. She gives us a rich history of farm life at the mercy of the forces of science and the market but grounded in rock-solid Wisconsin values. In our world of '140 characters' Jackie adds depth and texture with the remembered word, the treasured memory, and the wonderful characters she met on her life's journey.” - Dick Durbin, U.S. Senator-Illinois

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18
Years!

And...

We might not
be done yet!